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Senior Executive Intelligence Brief

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Friday, 21 March 2003

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Regional Notes

TERRORISM

Iraq: Terrorists Are Threat to US Forces at War's Onset [redacted]

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[redacted] an al-Qa'ida
Iran-based management council member late last year was preparing to use
northern Iraq-made explosives against US forces in southern Iraq.

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Iraq:

Russian, French Oil Companies Want Post-War Role [REDACTED]

Even without their governments' participation in military action in Iraq, Russian and French oil companies are using a variety of tactics to protect their equities and ensure a continued role in the country's oil sector. Just in the past two months, three Russian firms—Stroytransgaz, Soyuzneftegaz, and Tatneft—have signed or initialed development contracts with Baghdad, with support from senior government officials.

- The agreements were signed during a delegation visit to Baghdad headed by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Saltanov and Deputy Energy Minister Matlashov, according to press reports.
- *Moscow and Russian oil companies may calculate that signed contracts will give them a legal claim to Iraqi oilfields whether Saddam stays or goes.* [REDACTED]

Moscow and Paris probably calculate that any new Iraqi government will be pressed to be transparent and impartial in awarding oilfield contracts, and that future donors' conferences and debt negotiations will give them leverage. [REDACTED]

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